

Board of Directors Teleconference November 25, 1997

The Board of Directors of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) convened by teleconference on Tuesday, November 25, 1997 at 1:30 p.m. The meeting was led by its Chair, Ms. Carol Batterton of the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission. A list of action items is provided in Attachment A and a list of participants is given in Attachment B.

ORD Reorganization

Ms. Nancy Wentworth briefed the Board on the internal reorganization of ORD and the assignment of NELAP to the National Center for Environmental Research and Quality Assurance, Quality Assurance Division.

Promoting NELAC to Small Labs - Competing with Large Labs

Mr. Chuck Wibby gave an overview of the presentation that was given to laboratories in Colorado. He stated that the presentation was structured by Mr. Robert Luna. It featured the following topics: 1) Why NELAC is critical to the small laboratory; 2) Arguments against NELAC; 3) Accreditation process, and 4) What happens if a State does not get involved with NELAC. Mr. Wibby also reported on the meeting in Denver of all laboratories. He, Mr. Luna, Mr. Jerry Parr and Mr. Ron Cada briefed the group on NELAC. The straw vote showed near unanimous support for NELAC involvement for drinking water, hazardous waste and waste water program under NELAC.

Implementation Issues

Ms. Mourrain addressed the Board on potential problems of States accrediting out-of-state laboratories. The Board agreed that States would not be required to be the primary accreditor for an out-of-state laboratory. The Board discussed a 2-year grace period that would be offered (upon written request when the deficiency is noted) to the States to work out problems regarding their NELAC accreditation.

Ms. Mourrain made the recommendation that the issue of the two-tier system should be discussed by the Transition Committee so that everyone is aware that there could be more than one accreditation program in a State. She also recommended extending the application deadline for the first round to January 31, 1998, to which the Board agreed.

The Supplemental Requirements topic will be discussed at a later time.

Interim Meeting

Ms. Mourrain stated that there would be a meeting of the BOD/Chairs on Monday evening (January 12, 1998) at 5:00p.m. Ms. Batterton asked if any members could come in early and visit with some of the Assistant Administrator's of EPA. Ms. Mourrain mentioned that 500 copies of the standards are being printed by the EPA Printing Office. These will be available at the Interim and Annual meetings. Ms. Mourrain also stated that the postcards had been mailed announcing the Interim Meeting and that the brochure is in the process of being printed.

Letter on Institutional Memory

Mr. John Anderson stated that the intent of the standards should be clear. He stressed how important it was that good minutes be taken at all Committee meetings to maintain a NELAC institutional memory.

Change in Constitution/Bylaws

Ms. Bouchard stated that the *ad hoc* Committee on Field Measurements has asked to be designated as a Standing Committee. The Bylaws and Chapter One need to be changed to accomplish this. This proposal for changing the Bylaws needs to be addressed at the Interim Meeting in order for it to be officially recognized at NELAC IV. The Committee must answer the question of whether what they propose as Standards appear as a separate chapter or be integrated in the other chapters. The scope of NELAC would be changing from just accrediting laboratories to accrediting measurements that are made to comply with EPA monitoring requirements. It was suggested that this issue be placed on the agenda for discussion at the BOD meeting at the Interim meeting, January 12, 1998.

ECOS Status

Ms. Finazzo stated that the Regional Administrator, Region 2, had given her the name of a contact in the State Commissioner's Office. She will brief this person on NELAC and try to have it placed on the agenda.

Co-sponsor Status

This issue was deferred until the next meeting due to the absence of Ms. Thompson, Chair of the Conference Management Committee.

Upcoming Outreach Opportunities

Ms. Mourrain reported that an invitation had been received from ASTM to make a presentation at one of their meetings. She has also received invitations from ACIL and Air & Waste Management for a representative from NELAC to speak at their meetings in February and

September 1998, respectively. More discussion as to who will make the presentations and what NELAC wants to present is needed.

Policy on Letters to the Governors, etc.

Due to policy issues within EPA, Ms. Mourrain will write a policy on the proper procedures of preparing these letter or will include the procedures in a present policy.

NELAC IV

The next Annual Meeting will be held June 30 - July 2, 1998 at the Omni Hotel, San Antonio, TX. A flyer announcing the meeting will be in the packet given out at the Interim Meeting. The room rate will be \$124/day.

Other Items of Interest

- S Update on applications** - The first application was received from the State of Maryland. CO, OH, AZ, LA, KS, OR, CA, NH, ME, VT and MA also want to apply in the first round. This brings the present total to 19.
- S NELAC copyright/logo restrictions** - Ms. Mourrain reported that she is working on getting NELAC copyrighted and Ms. Bouchard is working on writing the restrictions for the use of the NELAC logo.
- S IAETL/ACIL merger** - Ms. Mourrain reported that they will be merging in January 1998. Marlene Moore will be Chairperson for the Accreditation Committee. Linda Christensen will be moving to another job and will not be continuing as a member of ELAB.
- S Dr. Roger Carlson** has resigned from the National Database Committee. Ms. Mourrain will schedule a meeting of this Committee to elect a new member and chair. Ms. Batterton and Ms. Mourrain will discuss this issue further.
- S Database status** - Ms. Mourrain suggested that NELAC might want to "borrow" the database already being used by either NCWM or NVLAP. She will talk to Ms. Wentworth about this issue.
- S** There will be an **expansion of NLLAP**. Further discussion on their relationship with NELAC needs to be on-going. It was recommended that Mr. Scalera talk with the Field Measurements Committee.
- S** Ms. Mourrain stated that she had included Mr. Jerry Parr's article for the Board's information. This article will be published by *Accreditation and Quality Assurance in Analytical Chemistry*.

The next teleconference will be on December 18, 1997.

Attachment A

**Action Items
Board of Directors Teleconference
November 25, 1997**

| Number | Action | Date Completed |
|---------------|--|-----------------------|
| 1. | Mr. Wibby will send copies of the proceedings book from the presentation for the small laboratories to the Board members for their information. | |
| 2. | Ms. Mourrain will modify the implementation options paper for the States to reflect the change regarding the fact that they will not be required to be a primary accreditor for out-of-state laboratories. | |
| 3. | The issue of the one time 2-year grace period for the States to correct deficiencies regarding their NELAC accreditation will be referred to the Accrediting Authority Committee. | |
| 4. | Ms. Mourrain will send a letter to all the representatives changing the date for the application submission to January 31, 1998. | 12/4/97 |
| 5. | Ms. Mourrain will discuss supplemental requirements with Ms. Bouchard and Dr. Jackson. | |
| 6. | Ms. Batterton will target a few Board members to meet with the EPA AAs on Monday, January 12, 1998 prior to the Interim Meeting. | |
| 7. | The issue of good minutes, clearly showing the intent of changes to the Standards should be addressed at the BOD/Chair meeting prior to the Interim Meeting. | |
| 8. | The issue of the change to the Constitution/Bylaws should be placed on the agenda for the BOD meeting at the Interim Meeting. | |
| 9. | The issue of who will make the presentations regarding NELAC and the content of the presentations need to be discussed. (ASTM, ACIL and Air & Waste Management Meetings) | |
| 10. | Ms. Mourrain will write a policy on the proper procedures of writing letters to the Governors, etc. | |

Participants
Board of Directors Teleconference
November 25, 1997

| Name | Affiliation | Telephone Numbers |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Carol Batterton, Chair | TNRCC | Tel: 512-239-6300 Fax: 512-239-6307 email: cbatterton@tnrcc.state.tx.us |
| Ken Jackson, Chair-elect | NY Dept. of Health | Tel: 518-485-5570 Fax: 518-485-5568 e-mail: jackson@wadsworth.org |
| Charles Hartwig, Past Chair | FL Dept. Of Health | Tel: 904-791-1550 Fax: 904-791-1567 email: charles_hartwig@dcf.state.fl.us |
| John Anderson Invited Guest | State of Illinois | Tel: 217-782-6455 Fax: 217-602-5547 e-mail: epa6103@epa.state.il.us |
| Pauline Bouchard Invited Guest | MN Dept. Of Health | Tel: 612-623-5331 Fax: 612-623-5514 email: pauline.bouchard@health.state.mn.us |
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| Marcia Davies | DOD | Tel: 402-697-2555 Fax: 402-697-2595 email: marciadavies@usace.army.mil |
| Barbara Finazzo | USEPA, Region II | Tel: 732-321-6754 Fax: 732-321-4381 e-mail: finazzo.barbara@epamail.epa.gov |
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